

University of Montana ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Mike Mansfield Speeches

Mike Mansfield Papers

8-4-1970

Congressional Record - ABM

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches

Recommended Citation

Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "Congressional Record - ABM" (1970). *Mike Mansfield Speeches*. 893.
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/893

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Mike Mansfield Papers at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mike Mansfield Speeches by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I wish to take this occasion to express my support for the amendment just offered by the distinguished Senator from Kentucky (Mr. COOPER). He, together with the distinguished Senator from Michigan (Mr. HART), has furnished significant leadership in this particular area. Others have contributed immensely as well.

May I say that I think the amendment now at the desk goes a long way toward meeting the administration's objectives in developing a relationship between the ABM and the SALT talks now underway in Geneva. As I understand it, the amendment provides for the full funding of phase 1 of the Safeguard program at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls, Mont., and Grand Forks Air Force Base in Grand Forks, N. Dak. It provides also additional research and development funds covering a continued investigation into an ABM system that would be free of the many technical difficulties already confronted in the development of Safeguard. If adopted, this amendment would not provide funds for Whiteman in Missouri and Warren in Wyoming. But it appears to me that the Hart-Cooper interests have gone about 90 percent of the way in seeking an accommodation with the administration and should satisfy every argument raised that the ABM should be continued at this time to help the SALT negotiations and to put together the components to see exactly what we have. As far as I am concerned, I intend to stand fully behind this particular amendment as the wisest possible alternative to what the administration is seeking in terms of the Safeguard program.

Most importantly, I think this amendment is one which will achieve the greatest and widest support. I believe it has the most validity and would give us the most favorable posture strategically. I would hope that those of us who are interested in this question of the ABM would not be diverted in other directions.

I would hope that we could recognize the always prevalent distinction between the possible and the impossible. The best is sometimes the worst enemy of the good. Last year, the Senate devoted great energies and time to study the full ramifications of the ABM—first as a weapons system and whether it could perform its stated mission if deployed; and, secondly, the effects deployment would have on the arms race.

Last year, the President in advocating the deployment of the first two sites stated that any future expansion of these initial sites would be predicated upon the international situation that existed when the time for any future expansion had arrived and the experience that had been gained from the first two sites.

When the first two sites were deployed, this country and the Soviet Union had not even agreed to sit down and talk about the limitation of strategic systems including the ABM. Today, when the consideration of the ABM expansion is before us, not only are we talking with the Soviet Union at Vienna but we are receiving most optimistic reports about the progress of these talks. The international situation seems in this context to have significantly improved.

I don't know what positive information could have developed from the assembly of the components at the first two sites or elsewhere; nothing has really been put together at those sites, and in fact I understand as well that the work is running several months behind.

The pending amendment would provide close to \$1 billion of new money for the initial two sites. It is every additional dollar that the administration requested for these first two sites. The amendment does exclude the start of two additional sites until these first two sites are further along so that the Congress and the Defense Department will be able to study just what the experience of the initial assembly has been.

Many of those Senators who are convinced that the Safeguard is technically deficient, that it could not perform its mission even if built exactly to design and operated exactly to specifications, have expressed a willingness to embrace this amendment because of the administration's argument that failure to permit the ABM to be continued could adversely affect the SALT negotiations. In spite of the fact that proceeding with this ABM weapons system could well stimulate the Soviet Union to maintain a comparable bargaining posture by continuing their SS-9 production to keep pace, the combined judgment of the sponsors of this amendment is that we should be willing to commit this additional \$1 billion to provide our negotiators every argument they feel they need. A comprehensive SALT agreement would be well worth every dollar to our people and the people now born and yet to be born throughout the world.

To reiterate, under the Hart-Cooper proposal, research and development will be carried on during the course of site construction in Montana and North Dakota; and I think it ought to be said, again and again and again, that the Safeguard ABM system is far from per-

fect; that the radar component is most vulnerable to attack and if damaged in attack, the whole system fails. As far as the Spartans and Sprints are concerned, they still need vast improvement if they are to perform their respective missions, and as far as the computer component goes, it is far, far from perfect when faced with a program as difficult as is that needed for a missile attack.

To show how difficult the computer problem is, I think I should say, incidentally and in all good humor, that some weeks ago I received a letter signed by several Members of this body, asking for funds to elect a Republican senatorial candidate. It was the product of a computer selection of possible contributors.

The reason I mention this is that this was a simple computer problem to solve; and if a simple problem can generate a computer mistake of that sort, asking a Democrat to contribute funds to a Republican candidate—in violation of Federal law, I believe—just think of how critical—how terribly vital would be the computer function in the far wider and more serious situation involving the ABM.

The fact is research is not completed. It is far from finished. There are bugs in the system. It is imperfect. It is not accurate. These things have to be worked out. And on the basis of the Hart-Cooper proposal, work can go forward on this system, not only during the construction of the ABM sites at Malmstrom and Grand Forks, but also through the use of the additional Safeguard research and development funds outside of the projects themselves.

So I would hope that those of us who are interested in a workable and feasible system and those of us who are interested in the SALT talks as they relate to the ABM, will be aware of how fundamental the Hart-Cooper amendment is. I hope we will not be diverted in other directions or in other ways. I hope that together we can put our whole support and effort behind the Cooper-Hart amendment, which I think accommodates fully each argument proposed by the administration. It takes into consideration the significance of the SALT talks, and it contemplates the construction of a system which, if needed, will be workable—a system which the taxpayers can be assured will return to them a comparable value for what they have expended in tax dollars.

So I commend the distinguished Senator. I am delighted that this is the pending business, and I hope the Senate will give it its most serious consideration.

To reiterate under the Hart-Cooper proposal research and development will be carried on during the course of the construction at Malmstrom and North Dakota, and I think it ought to be said, again and again and again that the Safeguard ABM system is far from perfect; that the radar component is most vulnerable to attack and if damaged in attack, the whole system fails. As far as the Spartans and Sprints are concerned, they still need vast improvement if they are to perform their respective missions, and as far as the computer component goes, it is far, far from perfect when faced with a program as difficult as is that needed for a missile attack.

Mr. Mansfield. Mr. President, I wish to take this occasion to express my support for the amendment just offered by the distinguished Senator from North Dakota (Mr. Cooper). He together with the distinguished Senator from Michigan (Mr. Hart), has furnished significant leadership in this particular area. Others have contributed immensely as well.

Now I say that I think the amendment now at the desk goes a long way toward meeting the administration's objectives in developing a relationship between the ABM and the SALT talks now underway in Geneva. As I understand it, the amendment provides for the full funding of phase I of the Safeguard program at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls, Mont., and Grand Forks Air Force Base in Grand Forks, N. Dak.; provides for additional research and development funds covering a continued investigation into an ABM system that would be free of the many technical difficulties already encountered in the development of Safeguard. It adopted this amendment would not provide funds for Whiteman in Missouri and Warren in Wyoming but it appears to me that the Hart-Cooper interests have gone about 80 percent of the way in working an accommodation with the administration and should satisfy every argument raised that the ABM should be continued at this time to help the SALT negotiations and to put together the components to see exactly what we have. As far as I am concerned, I intend to stand fully behind this particular amendment as the most realistic alternative to what the administration is seeking in terms of the Safeguard program.

Most importantly, I think this amendment is one which will achieve the greatest and widest support. I believe it has the most flexibility and would give us the most favorable posture strategically. I would hope that those of us who are interested in this question of the ABM would not be diverted in other directions.